THE AERONAUT.

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Gentes Malunt ortus
Miari quam vespe tuos –
Lucan.

Man rather wonders orderly
Than strives to pierce thy mystery.
ANON

Whatever is in any manner connected with the origin and progress of letters, can never fail of being in some degree interesting, to a liberal and inquisitive mind. Particularly is the attention captivated, by any information respecting their early, fabled and mysterious rise.

From this cause, the hieroglyphics of the Egyptians, must ever be an object of curiosity, to those who having long enjoyed the march of mind and benefits of science, and from their infancy basked in the blaze of intellectual light, are led to enquire from whence the rays of its glory sprung, and its effulgence emanated - which in its still increasing splendor, has made men happy, exalted, immortal.

With these early and rude memorials, but few have any acquaintance; and even their knowledge is founded for the most part upon conjecture, or at best, uncertain & vague tradition: As we have in the course of our aerial voyages, often gone back to the days of yore, and have also in our external decorations displayed a passion for antiquity, it may not be impro-

to give such few hints as we can communicate, respecting the hieroglyphical symbols of the ancients. Our sources of information have been few, and our own conjectures can probably throw but little additional light upon the subject.

The human mind, always fond of going beyond its own prescribed and defined sphere of action, has in every age extended its enquiries into the secrets of nature. Mysterious, their causes of their various eccentricities and wonders, as well as their authors, have been sought after with indefatigable zeal. To hold communion with such superior beings, or what answers the same purpose, to have the reputation of so doing, to possess or be reputed to possess knowledge withheld from the vulgar and the uninitiated, has a fascinating

fame in the eyes of man. Nothing can so much amuse and gratify the fancy; indeed without such aid her boundaries could have been contracted within but a narrow compass. It elevates him in his own opinion, and also in that of the world: it gratifies his vanity & lands off ennui, and communicates a daring, unwonted pleasure. But these are only among its inferior temptations. It is in an age of darkness and moral midnight, that its more useful and practical advantages are most abundantly developed. It is the source of respect - honour and emolument - present fame and eternal remembrance.

Thus as the stream of ages has rolled on - whenever it has been

seen to pervade turbid and darkened waters, beneath a black and cheerless horizon, there have we seen superstition dominant, and the black art (as it has been appropriately termed) commonly in vogue. We have seen those who were supposed to deal in it, at one time honored, feared and adored, at another abhorred and persecuted.

In the early ages of the world, while the recollections of the immediate revelations from heaven, and those miraculous means which were employed to set in motion the grand machine of time, were yet so recent and lively, we may with reason suppose, that these superstitions persist had a more than ordinary influence upon society, and to this cause we may ascribe, if not the origin, at least the cultivation of hieroglyphics.

It is perfectly well understood, that these were not the letters of Egypt a common method of communicating information in the intercourse of society. And independant of the fact, reason denies the supposition. The difficulty of deciphering them would have rendered them of little use although their invention probably may have sprung from such a source for we find them used by the Mexicans at the discovery of America, as well as the North American Indians, many years ago; they were employed as histories, or a sort of telegraph.

Memnonius a fabled God, who like all their other deities had a superfluous number of names, is said to have invented Egyptian letters. Hieroglyphics were cultivated and used among the priests, the

aristocracy of the country, and who to keep up their credit, enveloped themselves in mystery. In order that their knowledge might not become common, it was therefore expedient to employ a particular language, in which to convey it. Such were these symbols - which common sense seems to dictate were purely meant to meet the eye, and by their resemblance to [illegible] or to material objects communicate intelligence - though I believe some modern has conjectured, that like our hieroglyphical puzzles, they were a mixture of words expressive of articulate sounds, running into each other, and symbols.

Precisely from the same principle which thus induced them to adopt this hieroglyphical character, the

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* as the name alone sufficiently indicates.

Roman Catholic Church has always so tenaciously adhered to the Latin service of the Church - and even at the present day, when all former grounds of excuse have vanished away, and language can be no longer a plea, retains it in her worship - we always have great respect for whatever is unintelligible. as well as for the individual who understands it. +

But without more remark let us proceed to give an account of their hieroglyphics in general, with a few instances of particulars, and of particular application. As first as to the symbols themselves, they are said to have been of two sorts - expressing the nature and attributes of the deity, by the peculiar properties and dispositions

+ perhaps a more exquisite bull was rarely made -

of different animals - a those of lines and figures. And thus one deity was represented under a great variety of forms - for instance, Providence was denoted by a crocodile - alluding to the peculiar instinct of that animal, in laying its eggs and providing for its own and its offsprings safety. Providence was also represented by a falcon - a bird of keen sight and flying to a great height. Even now days we use a similar hieroglyphic, in using an eye as a symbol of him who sees all things. In the bellies of the Egyptian mummies, small figures of their Gods are found; having the heads of different animals. Each of the brute creation has always had any appropriate quality assigned

-ned to it, which is personified in Poetry, and shadowed forth in fable. So among the Egyptians, they probably worshipped brutes & made their Gods with such un-awkward appendages, in order to express their adoration of some good attribute, or deprecate the vengeance of some bad quality.

Osiris and Isis were their two principal Gods. Typhon was the most powerful daemon or evil genius, and was constantly warring with Osiris and Isis who were their benevolent deities. The account which Sanchyo gives of them appears extremely rational. Osiris, he says, signified Nilus - Isis, the earth made pregnant by the river (meaning that it produced its fruits

being made fertile by the periodical inundation.) Typhon the sea. This last was their greatest enemy, and had once covered part of the country. So they fabled that Osiris repulsed Typhon, and afterwards was murdered by him, because the sea finally receives the river. A French writer says, that by Osiris and Isis, they meant the two great celestial luminaries. This they might have done, in addition to what the other travellers report — but at any rate, they had some such physical significations and the first suggested seems most probable. Theologically, says the French author, they represented the supreme beings, and universal nature. All the rude nations with which we are acquainted, have

evinced a disposition to deify their heads. Osiris and Isis were hero-Gods. Besides these there were a multitude of inferior deities of the same stamp - of whose attributes we have already spoken. They were the ministers of the two higher powers, and presided over the elements and mundane powers.

A human body, with a hawks head represents Osiris as God, for the reason already mentioned. When they wished to mention him in the capacity of the fountain of light, they used the similitude of a beetle who rolls its ball of dirt continually over, as the sun appears to revolve about the earth. They also used the figure of a bull, to denote the sun - but for no similitude that

July] Hieroglyphics.

I discover, either from the conjectures of others, or any thing I can myself conjecture. Perhaps this may be the reason. In all ages of credulity, we find that fables have been resorted to, to conceal the shame of females, whose high birth & peculiar situation, made it a matter of importance. Thus Rhea Sylvia endeavored to hide her disgrace and escape punishment. Now Osiris a king of Egypt who built the royal city of Memphis, and who had a daughter of that name gave out that she had met Nilus in the form of a Bull; intending thus to turn her shame into his own glory ~~into~~ This might very well account for their worshipping the Apis or Bull. In it they supposed the soul of Osiris to be inclosed. It was black, and

with a white heart.

Sometimes Isis had a Lion's head - His heart being most potent when in the sign Leo, at which time the Nile overflows its banks. To this also the sphinx alluded in their theology - having a virgin's head and lion's body - alluding to the sun's being in Leo and Virgo at the period just mentioned. Isis or Nilus was also hieroglyphically represented, as an old man lying down, crowned with a naval garland and surrounded with sixteen children; meaning the ~~different~~ sixteen cubits height, to which the river rose.

Isis held in her hand a cornucopia, and had a multitude of breasts; alluding to the all bountiful and bountiful fecund

earth - When she was spoken of as the moon, her symbol was a cow, half black, half white, representing her dark and enlightened parts.

Ons was the offspring of Isis and Osiris and meant the world, and the harmony of the mundane system. He held a staff with a bird of variegated ~~plumage~~ plumage upon the top, denoting the variety of creation - In one hand a litius, like that the Roman augurs employed, with which to quarter the heavens - a pruner in the other - the meaning of this last is sufficiently obvious.

Typhon was denoted by a hippopotamus or river horse - a ferocious and cruel animal.

Hermes or Mercury, the first among their priests probably, and

according to some authorities, intro-
duced arts and sciences into Egypt.
His symbol was a dog's head on
a human body; denoting his
sagacity. Though it would seem
that there was such a God named
Anubis. from this passage of Virgil

Omnigenumque deum monstra. et
latrator Anubis
Contra Neptunum et Venerem, contraq:
Minervam,
Tela tenent. *

Of the inferior deities, it is unne-
cessary to speak. We do not pretend
to write a system but merely to give a
general idea of the subject.

In our next number we
shall take notice of other mytholo-
gical resemblances and their
applications.

S.

Vide Sandy's travels - page 104